

Rural Utilities Service, USDA

§ 1776.10

be addressed to the attention of the Assistant Administrator, Water and Environmental Programs as follows: ATTN: Assistant Administrator, WEP, Rural Utilities Service, Stop 1548 Room 5145 South, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20250-1548.

(c) Electronic applications may be filed through Grants.gov, the official Federal Government Web site at <http://www.grants.gov>. The applicant must be registered with Grants.gov before they can submit a grant application. The applicant should refer to instructions found on the Grants.gov Web site for procedures for registering and using this facility. An applicant who is not registered on Grants.gov should allow a sufficient number of business days to complete the process. Applications submitted electronically must be show an electronic date and time stamp on or before the filing deadline to be considered for the grant period.

(d) The methods of submitting applications may be changed from time to time to reflect changes in addresses and electronic submission procedures. The applicant should refer to the most recent notice of funding availability for notice of any such changes. In the event of any discrepancy, the notice must be followed.

§ 1776.9 Scoring applications.

(a) Applications that are incomplete or ineligible will be returned to the applicant, accompanied by a statement explaining why the application is being returned.

(b) Promptly after an application period closes, all applications that are complete and eligible will be ranked competitively based on the following scoring criteria:

(1) Degree of expertise and experience in promoting the safe and productive use of individually-owned household water well systems and ground water. Up to 30 points

(2) Degree of expertise and successful experience in making and servicing loans to individuals. Up to 20 points

(3) Percentage of applicant contributions. Points allowed under this paragraph will be based on written evidence of the availability of funds from sources other than the proceeds of a HWWS grant to pay part of the cost of

a loan recipient's project. In-kind contributions will not be considered. Funds from other sources as a percentage of the HWWS grant and points corresponding to such percentages are as follows:

- (i) 0 to 9 percent—ineligible;
- (ii) 10 to 25 percent—5 points;
- (iii) 26 to 30 percent—10 points;
- (iv) 31 to 50 percent—15 points; and
- (v) 51 percent or more—20 points

(4) Extent to which the work plan demonstrates a well thought out, comprehensive approach to accomplishing the objectives of this part, clearly defines who will be served by the project, and appears likely to be sustainable. Up to 20 points

(5) Extent to which the goals and objectives are clearly defined, tied to the work plan, and measurable. Up to 10 points

(6) Lowest ratio of projected administrative expenses to loans advanced. 10 points

(7) Administrator's discretion, considering such factors as creative outreach ideas for marketing HWWS loans to rural residents, the amount of funds requested in relation to the amount of needs demonstrated in the work plan, previous experiences demonstrating excellent utilization of a revolving loan fund grant, and optimizing the use of agency resources. Up to 10 points

(c) All qualifying applications under this part will be scored based on the criteria contained in this section. Awards will be made based on the highest ranking applications and the amount of financial assistance available for HWWS grants. All applicants will be notified in writing of the score each application receives.

§ 1776.10 Grant agreement.

RUS and the grant recipient will enter into an agreement setting forth the terms and conditions governing a particular HWWS grant award. RUS will furnish the form of grant agreement. No funds awarded under this part shall be disbursed to the grant recipient before the grant agreement is binding and RUS has received a fully executed counterpart of the grant agreement.